

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering the application and for indicating that claims 12-15 and 17-19 are allowed. Additionally, Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 22, 24, and 26 contain allowable subject matter.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-6, 8-15, 17-22, and 24-26 were pending in this application. Claims 1-6, 8-11, 21, 22, 24 and 26 are canceled in this reply without prejudice or disclaimer. New claims 27 -30 are introduced in this reply. Currently, claims 12-15, 17-20, 25, and 27-30 are pending in this application. Claims 12, 20, 27, and 29 are independent with claims 13-15, 17-19, 25, 28, and 30 depending therefrom.

Claim Amendments

Claims 12 and 20 are amended in this reply to clarify the claimed subject matter. Specifically, claims 12 and 20 are amended to correct improper capitalization. Additionally, claim 20 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 22. New claims 27 and 29 include the subject matter of claims 20 and 24, and claims 20 and 26, respectively. New claims 28 and 30 include the subject matter of claim 25. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments.

Claim Objections

Claims 12 and 20 stand objected to for improper capitalization. Specifically, lines 11 and 19 of claim 12 and line 9 of claim 20 were objected to for containing improper capitalization. Claim 12 has been amended to recite “plurality of first projections” and

“plurality.” Claim 20 has been amended to recite “portions.” Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Acknowledgement of Priority

The Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner acknowledge Applicant’s claim for foreign priority. The present application emerged from a PCT application based on an original patent application filed in the UK under G.B. Application No. 0324028.0 on October 14, 2003. Please find enclosed a copy of the PCT/IB/304 acknowledgement that a priority document was received with the International Bureau. The Applicant notes that, according to the Patent Application Information Retrieval website, a certified copy of the priority application is on file at the USPTO as of April 5, 2006.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 8-11, 20, and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 1,837,639 (“Wickersham”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,361,188 (“Russell”). Claims 2 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wickersham in view of Russell, further in view of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0167173 (“Griffin”). Claims 3-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wickersham in view of Russell, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,885,225 (“Rollins”).

Claims 1-6, 8-11, and 21 are cancelled in this reply. Claim 20 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 22, and thus, is now allowable. Claim 25 now depends from an allowable base claim. Accordingly, the rejection as applied to claims 1, 8, 9, 11, 20, and 25 is now moot, and withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

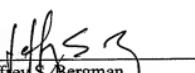
As indicated by the Examiner in the Office Action, claims 24 and 26 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. New claim 27 recites the limitations of previously presented claims 20 and 24 in independent form. Similarly, new claim 29 recites the limitations of previously presented claims 20 and 26 in independent form. Accordingly, these claims are now allowable. New claims 28 and 30, which depend directly from allowable claims 27 and 29, respectively, include the limitations of claim 25 and are also believed to be allowable.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number [17172/034001]).

Dated: July 20, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

By 
Jeffrey S. Bergman
Registration No.: 45,925
OSHA LIANG LLP
909 Fannin Street, Suite 3500
Houston, Texas 77010
(713) 228-8600
(713) 228-8778 (Fax)
Attorney for Applicant

Attachments